

Secrets to Successful Blood Drives – What SOM worksite blood drive coordinators say:

DEQ and Agriculture worksite blood drive coordinators in Constitution Hall, Lansing have approached the Outback Steakhouse and have tickled employee donors' appetites with special eating experiences after the drives. For the September blood drive Outback is sponsoring a "Taste of the Outback" (appetizers & salads). And they may be doing some serious meals for every other drive.

The success of our blood drives is due to:

- The mass e-mails that we send out notifying as many employees as possible of our drives and the appointment reminders that are sent.
 - The flyers that we receive from the Red Cross to post of upcoming drives.
 - The drawings for Subway certificates, State of Michigan incentives and whatever the Red Cross is offering.
 - We also try to plan a cook out to coincide with the drive because we like to have something special for lunch!
 - But the most important element to our success is the employees that have made the blood drives important in their lives. Without them we would not be able to reach our goals!
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We have really been playing up the chance to win the statewide quarterly prize, but then have also been throwing in our own prize drawings (last time a \$25 gift certificate to Cold Stone Creamery; this time, a staff member volunteered to bake a bunch of her most-requested cookies for a gift basket).

And honestly, it's a lot of gentle pestering. Most of the first-timers (or long-time, used-to-do-it-but-haven't-done-it-in-years types) I think really want to help but have fear of the needles, of how they'll feel during and after, or fear of fainting ... when we do talk about their fears and direct them to places to get good, sensible information, most do come around.

I think next time we have a drive we will need to send a special note of encouragement to the first-timers, to invite them back. And think of another

good prize. As our next one will likely be in October, sounds like a good time for a cider mill visit or something along those lines.

I can tell you that my Office of Communication does two things for me. We have a monthly newsletter for DHS and we also have the ability to do a building-wide email. When it's time for the newsletter to come out before the drive, I put a blurb in.

- One week before the drive, I do a building-wide email, announcing the date & time of the blood drive, asking people to contact me for an appointment.
 - I also put the posters the Red Cross provides for me on all 15 refrigerators in the building! The day before the drive, I do a reminder email to all who have made an appointment for the next day. At the blood drive, on the table where you have your juice & cookie, I put the reservation schedule for the next drive.
 - We do a lot of follow-up, encouragement and advance publicity. At our second blood drive we provided a lunch of hotdogs, coleslaw, not beans, fruit, juice, pop, potato chips, donuts & muffins.
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I would like to share with you how great the *Employees' Club* has been:

- They bought t-shirts that will be handed out to all those who show up to give blood, even if they can't donate.
- They also purchased a four-person package to The Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City, which will be given away at the very end of the day as a raffle prize.

If this is not reason enough to donate, there's one more thing: no store bought cookies for us. Several of our very own best bakers in the business have volunteered their kitchen skills, and will be bringing in cookies for our sampling.

Employees are sent emails at the beginning of the quarter to tell them when Blood Drives are taking place in the building and also where they can find other donation sites. Their name then goes into the drawing for a prize: first quarter's prize was a CD case and the second quarter's prize was Lugnut Bucks (two tickets to the Lansing baseball team's game).

Each DOC facility in Jackson takes turn sponsoring a blood drive every 90 days. We asked everybody in person or at roll call to donate, if they were able. Staff did a tremendous job helping each other with their duties to allow the uniform staff to donate.

- The Cotton Correctional Facility staff has been and continues to be very generous with all of the blood drives or fund raising activities that go on. Our goal was 45 units, we ended up providing 49. The biggest part of the planning was including the officers in the planning process; this time I included several officers in getting other officers to donate. I also had staff at the blood drive all day to call non uniformed staff and rescheduled them when the line was getting long, that kept anyone from having to wait too long and kept a nice flow through the whole day. All in all the drive was very successful and by adding the officers to the planning, we had several 2nd shift officers come in on their own time to donate instead of waiting until their shift started.
 - The Southern Michigan Correctional Facility blood drive coordinator says that they have prize drawings and provide snacks at their sponsored blood drives. The coordinator says that scheduling appointments works very well; it eliminates excess waiting periods. Also, the Employees Club donated \$50.00 which we used to purchase Subway gift certificates. Red Cross donated a \$25.00 gas card. Just recently a second shift corrections officer approached me and asked me to have a "special" blood drive to focus on second and third shift staff who are unable to donate during regular hours. Our warden approved it and we will be having a blood drive between the hours of 6pm - 12 pm. Inclusion, works!
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It works well to encourage 'donor buddies'; ask a fellow employee to go with you & donate blood together. This can really work well, especially when an employee has never donated and/or is not in the routine of donating regularly.

DOES YOUR WORKSITE HAVE "Secrets" TO SHARE? Please send to twissc@michigan.gov . Thank you.